

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TAGS: EWWT, CA

SUBJECT: GREAT LAKES PILOTAGE: CALL ON CANADIAN MINISTER OF TRANSPORT

PASS FOLLOWING TO DEPUTY SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION

JOHN W. BARNUM

1. I HAD USEFUL DISCUSSION WITH CANADIAN MINISTER OF TRANSPORT (JEAN MARCHAND) THIS MORNING ON SUBJECT OF GREAT LAKES PILOTAGE. I TOLD HIM THAT I HAD NOT COME TO GET INTO DETAILS OF THIS COMPLEX AND SENSITIVE PROBLEM AS OUR POSITION HAD BEEN MADE CLEAR IN DISCUSSIONS WHICH UNDER SECRETARY BARNUM HAD CONDUCTED WITH HIS CANADIAN COUNTERPART. MY COMMENTS SHOULD THEREFORE BE CONSIDERED IN THE LIGHT OF OUR DESIRE TO ELIMINATE OR MINIMIZE EXISTING CANADIAN-AMERICAN PROBLEMS PRIOR TO THE VISIT OF PRIME MINISTER TRUDEAU TO WASHINGTON NEXT MONTH. MARCHAND, WHO WAS APPARENTLY READY TO DISCUSS DETAIL, BECAME VERY INTERESTED AT THIS POINT AND SAID THE PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT IS CERTAINLY AN IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION.

2. I SAID I SHOULD MAKE CLEAR TO THE MINISTER

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THAT WE ARE NOT CONTEMPLATING DISCUSSION OF

THIS SUBJECT WHILE THE PRIME MINISTER IS IN WASHINGTON, BUT THAT MY EXPERIENCE WITH HIGH LEVEL VISITS HAS MADE ME AWARE THAT GROUPS INTERESTED IN CERTAIN SUBJECTS FREQUENTLY TRY TO MAKE USE OF SUCH VISITS TO EXPRESS THEIR VIEWS AND ATTAIN THEIR OBJECTIVES SOMETIMES WITH PUBLICITY, AND IT WAS THIS POSSIBILITY I WISHED TO AVOID. I SAID THAT UNLIKE THE CANADIAN SITUATION, THE PEOPLE INVOLVED ON OUR SIDE ARE UNIONIZED AND VERY ARTICULATE. MARCHAND SAID THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THIS VERY WELL.

3. I CONTINUED BY SAYING THAT BOTH CANADIAN AND AMERICANS RECOGNIZE THE DIFFICULTY OF ACHIEVING A LONG-TERM ARRANGEMENT, BUT IT WOULD EASE MATTERS CONSIDERABLY IF AN INTERIM AGREEMENT COULD BE ACHIEVED AT A MINIMUM BEFORE DECEMBER 15, WHICH IS THE DATE THE PRESENT ARRANGEMENTS EXPIRE. MARCHAND SAID OF COURSE THE PROBLEM WAS WHETHER IT WOULD BE BETTER TO GO ON WITH THE STATUS QUO RATHER THAN ATTEMPT AN INTERIM AGREEMENT. I SAID IT IS STATUS QUO WHICH IS CAUSING US TROUBLE. MR. BARNUM'S IDEAS, I SAID WERE VERY REASONABLE AND SHOWED CONSIDERABLE GOOD WILL WHICH, IF AGREED, MIGHT CARRY US FORWARD EVENTUALLY TOWARD A USEFUL PERMANENT ARRANGEMENT.

RM MARCHAND SAID THAT FORMULAS SUCH AS AN 80-20 PERCENT DIVISION OF REVENUES WOULD GIVE HIM A LOT OF TROUBLE, TO WHICH I COMMENTED THAT WE HAD BEEN MUCH MORE FORTHCOMING THAN THAT. HE INQUIRED IN WHAT WAY, TO WHICH I ANSWERED THAT IT WAS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT DISCUSSIONS HAD REVOLVED AROUND A SPLIT OF 58 PERCENT FOR THE U.S. AND 42 PERCENT OVERALL FOR THE CANADIANS IN A TEMPORARY ARRANGEMENT, WHICH STRUCK ME AS VERY GENEROUS GIVEN THE U.S. ORIGIN OF MOST OF THE ACTIVITY. HE SEEMED IMPRESSED. I SAID SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT WOULD TAKE PRESSURE OFF AND ENABLE HIS GOVERNMENT AND OURS TO FACE ELEMENTS WHO WERE NOT SATISFIED BY POINTING OUT ITS TEMPORARY NATURE.

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MARCHAND NODDED, AND SAID HE WOULD TALK TO HIS PEOPLE WITH A VIEW TO SEEING IF THEY COULD WORK MORE FLEXIBILITY INTO THE POSITION. I DEPARTED URGING HIM IF POSSIBLE TO GIVE ME AN ASSURANCE THAT AN AGREEMENT WOULD BE ACHIEVED BEFORE DECEMBER 15. HE REPEATED THAT HE WOULD DO WHAT HE COULD AND WOULD BE BACK IN TOUCH WITH ME.

5. DURING THE CONVERSATION WITH THE MINISTER, I PURPOSELY OMITTED ANY MENTION OF THE WELLAND CANAL IN FAVOR OF CONCENTRATING ON THE MAIN ISSUE OF DIVISION OF REVENUES. AFTER I RETURNED TO MY OFFICE, MARCHAND PHONED ME AND SAID HE HAD NOTED THAT I HAD NOT BROUGHT THE WELLAND INTO THE CONVERSATION, AND HE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW IF AN INTERIM AGREEMENT WOULD REQUIRE IN OUR VIEW A CHANGE IN PRESENT PILOTAGE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE WELLAND. I SAID I UNDERSTOOD THAT THE WELLAND OCCUPIES AN IMPORTANT PLACE IN OUR THINKING AND, WHILE IT WAS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT WE MIGHT REACH A TEMPORARY ARRANGEMENT WITH REGARD TO NOT CHANGING THE PRESENT ARRANGEMENTS IN THE WELLAND, I.E., CANADIAN CONTROL, THAT MIGHT BE DONE WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THE SOO LOCKS AND ST. MARY'S RIVER WOULD CONTINUE TO BE UNDER AMERICAN CONTROL. I ADDED THAT, THOUGH THAT WAS MY UNDERSTANDING, IT WOULD OF COURSE BE SUBJECT TO DOT VIEWS. MARCHAND SAID THIS WOULD HAVE AN EFFECT ON HIS THINKING WITH REGARD TO REACHING A TEMPORARY AGREEMENT, AND HE ASKED THAT I PROVIDE HIM WITH DOT'S REACTION. I SAID I WOULD ENDEAVOR TO DO SO. THEREFORE, REQUEST DOT POSITION RE WELLAND WHICH COULD BE CONVEYED.

6. I DO NOT INTEND TO CARRY THIS MATTER ON WITH MINISTER MARCHAND. IF MARCHAND REACTION IS POSITIVE WITH REGARD TO THE USEFULNESS OF ACHIEVING A TEMPORARY AGREEMENT BEFORE DECEMBER 15, THE MATTER THEN CAN BE CARRIED FORWARD IN MEETINGS ALREADY DISCUSSED BETWEEN DOT AND THE CANADIAN MOT REPRESENTATIVES.
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